

6 A

For Sr Roger Hills.

S E R M O N

Preached on the 27th. of *January*, 1673.

BEFORE SEVERAL

P E R S O N S

Who Formerly have had their

E D U C A T I O N

I N

St. Paul's School,
L O N D O N.



By R. P. Member of that S O C I E T Y.

Wisdom is justified of her Children.

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TO THE
READER.

Two Noble Factions have lift up their Heads to the apparent Danger of Government, Virtue, and true Religion. The one of these call all Matters into Question, and so Discard th: Duty of Man-kind; Pyrrhon is their old Master, whos: Creed they profess in his own termes. He gave out that there was neither Good, nor Evil, Just, or unjust; nothing was really so, only by law and custom somewhat was approved, and somewhat disfaſt:ed, or Decryed; These are, and needs must be

Οὐδὲν γὰρ ἔρασκον ἕτερον ἄν-
θρωπον ἕτερον δίκαιον ἕτερον ἄδικον.
μηδὲν εἶναι πῦρ ἀλθίστην, ἰούφιόν
καὶ εἶναι πάντα τοὺς ἀνθρώπους
πράττειν, Diogen. Laert. in vita
Pyrrhonis.

To the Reader

open Atheists, impudently Profane, and Gross Blasphemers of God, and all Virtue.

To these I say, that they Degrade their own Natures, and if they say true, are not Men, to whom conscience doth as certainly belong as any other power of Reason; and they are only Serpents, the subtillest of all the Beasts of the Field, though in Mans likeness. The Fabrick of Heaven and Earth is the great standing Miracle which must convince them of an Eternal Power and God-head. But if this have no Effect, Divine Mercy will have no further trouble with them; they are Anathema Marenatha already, and shall soon feel the Fury of that God whom they will not know: In the meantime it may be he will bring down some of these Nebucadnezers to the Baseness of all Ignominy, and to Graze with the Heard till they know that the most High Reignes, and doth whatsoever he pleaseth. The Lord Reigns.

The other sort are of those who boast of the sharpness of their Wit, and their absolute liberty of Will, both which make them in their own Opinions at least, Ethereal Genii, and in the Dialect of the Stoicks, such as may compare with Jupiter himself; for they tell us, that they are so Intirely at their own conduct, and choice, that God cannot Interpose, or alter them, but by that very act, he violates the Right of their Natures, and overthrowes the Order of Humanity, so that they are neither praise-worthy for well-doing, nor yet punishable for Misdemeanors.

Many

To the Reader.

Many of this sort bid Defyance to the others, and would be thought like Atlas, to hold up Heaven with their shoulders; they lay the Foundations of Nature, Society, Equity, Purity, and Piety, and challenge their Adversaries to Duel them therein. But while they go not forth to Battle in the strength of the Lord of Hosts, they have not I think, been successful in their Encounters, as the huge increase of Infidelity ever since this Contest began, will bear Witness. Let me say somewhat of the presumption of these Men, and somewhat of their Principles.

I acknowledg it is a Worthy Endeavour, and Deserves all the learning of this, or any other Age, to Discover the stability and rectitude of Moral and Christian Principles: But as it fares in Naturals, that no man knows the Work of God to Perfection, so is it undoubtedly in Spirituals: It is necessary then that they which undertake this Work be heartily humble, that they seek the illumination of the Glorious God, and have well-believed, and learned themselves what they would teach to others; Otherwise their own misconceptions of the things they would Evidence, their imperfect Ratiocinations concerning them, will as they have done, Embolden their Adversaries to conclude, that their probable Assertions have derived their Reputation, as it were wholly from the Politick Councils of Princes, and the Craft of Priests. Thus we shall make short Work, and at once burn our Ethicks, and our Bibles.

As

To the Reader.

As to their Principles : I affirm that to the best of my Understanding , they which Assert an Ungovernable and Incontroulable Liberty, are as Dangerous, though more sly Enemies of God , and true Righteousness : The Difference is not so great as may seem, for one part deny's the power of God, the other his Grace . One Affronts the Article of Credo in Deum Patrem, &c. Creatorem Cæli & Terræ, the other Disavow's Credo in Spiritum Sanctum. Yea I protest it to be Dishonourable to God, unbecoming his Wisdom, to bestow his Grace upon those that Declare they need it not ; Yea it is Hypocrisie for them to ask it, and contrary to the Tenor and Oeconomy of the Gospel. The Atheist will be Wiser than Christianity ; the Libertine will not be beholden to Christ : both these I hold equally false , perilous , and impudent.

I leave them then to consider, 1. If it were not indiscretion and weakness in God most Holy (I speak as a Man) to make such Creatures as Angels or Men, if according to these Mens supposals , he could not Govern them, incline, alter them, and have his Ends upon them. It is below the Wisdom of such Men as you, or myself, to make any thing, if we had power, and give it such excellent Liberty as should set it out of our Reach, Dominion , or Controle ; Wherefore it is impossible with me to Believe that God hath done so.

2. If

To the Reader.

2. If Man have such power and liberty as God cannot touch or intermeddle with, then is all Religion and Righteousness the proper fruit and product of our Sole Endeavours, which he that saith, must needs forget, or never have understood what he speaks of; For he that hath attained to pure and undefiled Religion, behaves himself Really and Honestly, though not perfectly so as the Unsearchable Wisdom of God hath nothing to find fault with, hath arrived to the Life, Goodness, and Holiness of God, hath so Reconciled himself to his Majesty, that he hath no Offence or Enmity against him: He that Believes that he can perform all this without Heavenly help, is neither acquainted with God or Man; He Abandons his Creator to keep Hogs and Sheep, to use his Providence about Beasts, Birds, and Fishes; But as for the great Man himself, he is *αὐτοδυνατός, αὐτοεπιδόξος, αὐτοδυνατός, αὐτοεπιδόξος*.

3 If God doth not concern himself with the free inward Actions of Men, all the Ministers of Religion must forthwith cease, for then they are but Vain and Hypocritical: If no Virtue Descend from the Almighty by them, what do they pretend to? I know not, and leave the consideration of it to them that do.

Both these grand Miscarriages which I have now spoken of, proceed not from Phlegmatick and Pleboian Souls; they are the deadly Weeds that grow in busie and ascending minds; this Poyson is not Expressed from

To the Reader.

from the stupifying Hemlock, but from piercing, enterprising, sublimata, and is most Displeasing to that high God, who most of all hateth Spiritual Wickedness. Some might happily suppose that when I was to speak to a Society of such Learned Men, I should have Courted them with a Panegyric of Arts and Knowledge, that it became me *ἀγροῦναι τὴν τέχνην* with the Fellow in Athenæus: But I thought it my Wisdom and Duty rather to profit, than please you, to show the use and danger of abusing what you have, or might have, than puff you up with a Vain Opinion of it.

For this end and purpose, being desired to Allow Copies of what I spake to you, I was content to suffer all to be made Publick. I Beseech therefore the Father of Lights, and God of all Grace to make it a Blessing to those that shall peruse it.

Horton, Feb. 2^d

PHIL



PHILIP. 3. 7.

*But what things were Gain to me, those
I counted Loss for Christ.*

ST. Paul (whose Name our Founder of Happy Memory would have us bear, professes himself a great Linguist (1 Cor. 14. 8. v.) I thank my God I speak with Tongues more
than you all; and since the Wisdom of the Prince is well discerned in choosing able Ministers and Instruments for his Business, Christ the King of Kings, and the wisdom of all the Wise, gives us to understand that for Intellectuals, Morals, Spirituals, and Fidelity in the use of them all, never any exceeded or equalled this Man, for for to him he committed that trust, which was formidable even to Angels; he sent of them to joy a righteous, but sorrowful Soul, to

encourage a fearful minded Man, to strengthen a staggering Faith ; they had but one particular, little Work to do, must say no more then the person, and present Case required, and flee up again to their Heavenly Habitations. But our Apostle was to lay the foundations of eternal truth and holiness for all Generations, to give an Example in himself, a repenting sinner, of doing and suffering according to the perfect Will of God, and to transact the Affairs of the Kingdome of Heaven with all the World.

I cannot surmise then Reverend and Learned Fathers and Brethren, that any of us should be so sick of an evil ^{sinning}, a windy conceit, or haughty presumption of our selves, as to despise the counsel, or practice of so great a Master in things both Humane and Divine. He did not mount up aloft, and sing to himself, he did not please himself with the Musick of his own Notes ; he did not so far forget himself as to think his own things were for his own Use and Admiration, but prostrated all at the feet of the Lord Jesus ταῦτα ὑμῶν διὰ τὴν χεῖρὸν ζυγίσαν, *I thought them all, saith he, loss for Christ Jesus.*

If you look back upon the ἀλυσά what things they were he made so light of, they seem no way contemptible : as (1.) He was Circumcised the Eighth day ; he was early and duly Consecrated to
God

God like *Isaac* the Son of the Promise; he was taken into the Covenant; and so under the Coverture of Gods mercy, and under the influence of his Grace. (2.) He was of the stock of *Israel*, a Legitimate Son of the Holy Seed, born in the House of God, had right to all the Ordinances & Promises of God. Of this the Antient Jew boasted more Warrantably, then any one now can of his Family, or Honourable Ancestors, (*Rom. 9. 4.*) *Whose are the Fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all God blessed for ever.* (3.) Of the Tribe of *Benjamin*, that is one of the most innocent and beloved Families of the Patriarchal Race; not by the Concubine, or Bond-Woman, but by the lawfull Wife, and Free.

Not by the despised and suborned *Leah*, but by the chosen and beloved *Rachel*; of a Country which lay not far from the Holy City, and the House of its God, and so fit to enjoy the Society of Holy Prophets, Priests, and Peers, and hear the Wisdom and determinations of their Oracles; for the shire-line of its Division ran through the streets of *Jerusalem*, though the Temple was in *Judah*.

— *Divisa erat Urbs (Hierosolym.) inter Tribum Judæ & Benjaminis.*

Processitq; linea determinans per ipsum atrium Templi. Gloss. in Sanhedr.

(4.) He was an Hebrew of the Hebrews ; of Holy Parents on both Sides : no proslyte , nor of later Institution , but bred up from his Infancy in the knowledge of the Law by those that had Learned it themselves , with the first Rudiments of things.

If you ask how it could be ? when as he professes himself a free Roman by birth , 22 Acts 28. Photinus the Learned Patriarch of Constantinople

resolves you well ;
 Ην παλαιῶν προγονῶν καὶ τῆς αἰμαγωγῆς γενέσας τοῦ Γίσχαλα (καὶ μὴ δὲ τοῦ τοῦ χαλκῆ τοῦ Γίσχαλα , καὶ οὐ πολλοῦ χρόνου) πῦρ ἐκ τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ ἔχε . Sec. Phot. in Epist. Eusebium, Cesar, Archiopile.
 His Father was born in Gischala, a petty Town of Benjamin, but carried Captive

with his Wife into Cilicia, where he Seated himself in Tarsus , and obtained the priviledge of a Roman . Soon after this (it is like) he had this Son, who hath been a Glorious blessing to all succeeding Ages. If you say, Sed genus & prout vos & que non fecimus ipsi , Vix eo nostra voco , Mark our Apostle was by Election and Inherent Virtue. 9. As to the Law he was a Pharisee ; he chose the strictest Sect of profession, Act. 26. 5. his Master was Gamaliel of Jerusalem ; one of the Honnestest Men, and profoundest Scribes of the Sanhedrim.

(6.) As to his Zeale, indeed he persecuted the Church ; which mistake of his had like to have cost

cost him the favour of God; but before Men, hath
this Excuse and Mitigation that he meant to up-
hold and secure that Religion which he knew, was
Originally from God himself.

(7.) As to the righteousness of the Law; he
was blameless: No Religion can save that Man
who doth not live by the Rule and Direction of
it; he doth but weakly receive his own Faith;
who doth not Address and Conform his Life ac-
cordingly; We shall be found vaine boasters, if
we magnifie the reasonableness of our Religion,
when we disavow it in our practice. *Clemens* of
Alexandria hath Taught us well, *ἡ πίστις καὶ ἡ με-
τανοία κατεργασμαί*: the Office and Busi-
ness of Faith is to beget a new heart
and life. *ῥιζὸς δ' ἀπαρχαί τος μενέουσιν τῶν
ἐγγεγραμμένων*. He is a believer that observes the
things which God hath delivered to him.

And what hath he delivered us, but (*ταῖς ἐντολαῖς
αὐτοῦ τῆ κατὰ πρᾶξιν τῶν προφητῶν*) his holy Comman-
dements, which if we keep not, we as certainly
believe, that God will refuse our Souls.

You see then what Advantages our Apostle had,
natural, and rational, civil, and religious; the pa-
rallels of which, most of us, I trust, have had by
the glorious Grace and Donation of God, viz.
an Early Baptism, were born Children of the
Church, had our Education where Learning and
virtue

virtue is professed, had the lively Oracles of God, new Citizens, at least for a time, of no mean City. I wish from my Soul now, that there be no profane person among us as *Eſau*, who by a naughty life and behaviour blemishes the Gifts of God, his worthy Masters, and his own Education.

Ο Πυθαγόρας οι νεωτάτια φιλοφύων τοις μετα τὸ προτεταπῶα ἐπὶ φιλοσοφίαν παλινδρεμίσασιν. καὶ ἡ παρὰ τὸτὸ ἀδελφὸς ἢ λόγῳ καὶ ἀποδείξει πυθαγόρας. *Origen. lib. 1. Contra Celsum.*

But if there be, and these Favours of God are bestowed on him in vain, and his Pearls are trampled under foot, let such a one bear his own burthen, and his Iniquity will be heavy upon his head. Yet doth not his Abuse detract any thing from the things themselves, but they remain, not φανομένης, ἀλλ' ὄντως καὶ ἀληθῶς κέρδι, not in appearance only, but verily, and in truth great Gains. Is it a mean Advantage to be able to converse with all the Worthy Souls in all parts and Ages of the World? Nothing to enjoy Conference with the *Hero's* past, and dead, and yet without Necromancy? To be in the *Roman* Senate, and hear the Masculine Eloquence of *Cicero*, who made them yield to him, to whom all the World submitted it self, is this of no value? You may Accompany *Cesar* in all his Expeditions and victories, and know the Caball and Intrigues of so wise a Commander; but above all, to be privy to the Wisdom

dom of God, to understand the Resentments and holy affections of those who had his most familiar Inspirations, how Glorious is this? What a raising Education! Is it a mean Opportunity to stand next to Heaven Gate, to hear the Son of God call, come ye and Inherit Eternal life, to have him reach forth his hand to pull us up to him, if we do not wickedly scorn and refuse so stupendous a Grace? If I should say more, which is not hard to do, we would be rather puffed up then Edified; for these External privileges do easily beget *πεποιθισιν ἐν σαρκί*, a confidence in our selves, and in our God wor: what! Let me rather say, what kind of Gains these things are, that we may understand our selves and them, with their Nature and Use:

And 1. They are *τὰ ἐν δυνάμει* rather Capacities then perfections, rather foundations then superstructures; they are excellent Instruments if held by a Wise and provident hand.

2. They are *τὰ μέσα καὶ ποικίλα*, things of a variable and middle nature, which may be used well or ill, according to the disposition and preparation of him that hath them; they are like the Sword which may Kill our Enemy, or Wound our Friend; not like the *τὰ ὑπόμυνα τῆς σωτηρίας* which you read of *Hebr: 6. 9.* the things that contain Salvation, which include it, which will bless and sancti-
fic

hie those that have them, and bring them assuredly unto God.

3. They are ~~the~~ *gratulations*, such gifts of God as flow from his Bounty and good Will to us; though they are not the peculiar Inheritances of the children of the Kingdom, yet are they faire Legacies which any one would be glad to have. Shame then must cover their faces who have had the Key of Knowledge, and the Institution of the Wise, and yet have not profited thereby. May I not say to some of you, What hath the Church or Nation, your company or Relations been the better for you? Or what you have been Learning with so much paines and patience? May I not take up that of *St: Augustin* against you? *Surgunt Indocti & rapiunt Cælum, sed nos cum Doctrina in Gehennam detrudimur*: The unlearned take Heaven by violence, and you and all your Learning are thrust into the Dungeon of utter Darkness. Verily these things were Gains, a great and fair Estate; but if We have mispent them, We shall give an Account to God, who knoweth the Worth and Weight of his own Talents.

I come now to the maine Assertion of the Apostle, and the Text, That as great as all these things are, He, and so We must count them all loss for Christ Jesus. He doth not require us to loose them; for Christ Ascended up on High, and bestowed

bestowed these and such like Gifts on Men, for the Edification of his body, which is the Church; and he doth not now mean that we should throw them all away, as some in this Malevolent and perverse Age understand it: the Scholiast hath well attained the meaning of the Apostle, οὐκ ἀπλῶς λέγει τὸ τοῦτο ὅτι ἐν ᾧ τὸ κακίζον τὴν νόμον. He speaks not simply, when he directs us to to count all los for Christ; as if he meant to revile the Law of God, his Gifts and Favours, as the *Marcionites* Occumen.
in loc. of old Construed him. Ἀλλὰ τῇ πρὸς χεῖρας σπουδαίει καὶ παραβλεῖ, either in comparison with Christ they are los, or else in Opposition they are not Worthy to appear.

1. In comparison of him; though these things have their Worth, yet if you respect ὑπερέχον τῆς γνώσεως, thes far more excelling and transcendent Knowledge of the Lord Jesus, they are meer dross and dung. And now Brethren, I wish we may all appear to be true Scholars of *St. Paul* herein; Ye have heard his ἡγούμεαι καὶ ἡγῶμαι his past, and present thoughts, and what he ever resolved to think, that all these things, yea, if they were a thousand times more Worth, are not yet Worthy to be Named with him, to be had or held if Christ be in the Counterpoise: *Sequimurne patrem non passibus æquis?* Do we follow this Fâther and Instructor in Jesus, though with little *Inlus* we take

shorter strides, and prove somewhat behind? In Christian simplicity and verity, if you do not look upon Christ as the Sun in the Firmament, as one that infinitely outshines all other glittering Excellencies, you are unworthy of him; let me add, so unworthy you are, that your Ingratitude will constrain him to With-hold the blessing of all from you, and the reproach you cast upon him will kindle his righteous Indignation against your Souls; yea your Parts and Ornaments of Wit Art, Learning are Cursed to you, and Cursed be they all, if you exalt them above and against the Lord Jesus our precious Saviour.

The grand Importance and Consequence of this Argument hath constrained me to urge and provoke you a little for your good with these honest Interrogatories. 1. Is Christ the end of all your Accomplishments? He is indeed the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the first and the last, the beginning and end of all things, but do you intend him? do you aime at him? do you count that all things are impertinent and vain that ~~you~~ do not Minister to him? do you reckon that you are frustrated in all your labours, if you have indeed the Reputation of Eminent, Learned, and Eloquent, but Jesus Christ is not sanctified, nor satisfied in the Salvation of his Redeemed ones? if the Lord Christ be principall, and all loss in comparison

son of him, he must thus be the end of all. 2ly.
 you Do ~~we~~ look upon all your Ornaments and Acqui-
 sitions but as meanes to this our end? In heart
 and conscience do we thus apprehend? do We
 thus Operate? do we promote with the grea-
 test Zeal and Diligence those things that lye nea-
 rest to the heart of the Lord Jesus, and are more
 precious to him than his blood? do we labour in
 our places and degrees that the people which he
 hath purchased may be redeemed from under the
 power of Satan? do we delight in sealing to
 them the love of God, and the consolation of
 the Spirit?

Do we Intend with Zeal and Heartiness ~~that~~
 Men ~~that they~~ would turn to Christ, and give
 him the glory which belongs to him? do We
 Intercede for them with God when they sin, as
 those that are truly toucht with the dishonour and
 loss of *Christ* himself? Is it our care in all our
 discourse, private, or publick, to shew forth the
 unsearchable Riches of his Majesty? If *Christ* be not
 the next end of our callings, yet is he the real and
 ultimate end of our conversation? If ye study the
 knowledge of the Laws, is it your principal
 aime that judgement and justice may be impar-
 tially Administred, that the Oppressed may be de-
 livered, that we may all live in Godliness and Ho-
 nesty to the praise of *Christ*? Is it not rather that

you may get Wealth, Reputation, and victory, while *Christ* and his Members bleed and perish? If you bestow your selves upon Nature, is it your business to Advance the publick Good of Mankind, and like Compassionate *Samaritans* to set free those whom Satan hath bound in manifold Infirmities? If ye be Gentlemen of Estate, do you employ your Authority, Interest, Wealth, and Power to Incourage the Profession, Ordinances, and People of *Christ*? If Citizens, and Traders, Is it your care that Faithfulness, Just dealing, Equity and Love may appear in all your Matters, and this for *Christ* his sake, who hath called us to be Brethren? If not Sirs, we pervert the Text, we disavow the Apostle, we loose our ~~right~~ in *Christ*, we count that he is but loss to us while the World is our Gain. If we do not thus aime at the Lord Jesus, he is but light with us in the Scales of comparison.

I proceed now to the 2d. Particular from the ~~conclusion~~ to the ~~maxim~~ to see if we reckon all but loss for the Lord, when he is set in Opposition with other things: When *Christ* is set before us on this Hand, and the World with all its Glories on that, what do we choos? whom do we follow? what do we hold to? We shall despise one to give content to the other; and I pray Brethren, Where are our Hearts? God hath as I may say,
Fur-

Furnished us Tables with Royal Dainties; He sets before us his own blood, and the flesh of his Son, a Feast which the Arch-Angels of Heaven are not Invited to in like sort : But there are Acorns also to be picked up, and the soure Fruits of the Hedges; As We feed, as we choose, so We discover our Nature and Appetite. Do we then, *Christian Brethren*, as the children of the Kingdom, as those that are of a Celestial and Divine Race, (do We I say) feast our Souls with Gods precious *Manna*, the things of life Eternal? Do we not rather with Kites and Vultures fly upon the Carrion? do we not hunt as the Swine that we may glut our selves with the trash and offal of this World? do we not glory in our hearts how much Wiser we are than our Religion? do we not look down from our high contemplations, and despise the poor people who serve the Lord Jesus in Humility, Simplicity, and the loss of all things? do We not rejoyce in a *Criticisim* more than in a Sacrament? have We not more Inward Satisfaction in little Experiment about matter, and motion, than in the Sanctification of the *Spirit*, and having our Names Written in the Book of Life? What is our Element my Friends? Where are we most our selves? Had we rather be in the company of the Holy Jesus, and doing his Work, than vending our selves as Acute and Learned? I beseech you by the Mercies

sies of God, let us lay our hands upon our hearts, and ask within doors if these things be not too true with many of us ; *Christ* ought to have had the preference , he is the Altar that must Sanctifie our Gold, our Gifts, and Parts, I meane, or they will never find acceptance before the Throne of God.

That this may be more effectual , let me present you with a few *Considerations* Relating hereto, and I have done. 1 Know that *Christ* is *Worthy* of all the Interest that he claimes in your Hearts and Study's ; Consider the Dignity of his Person • We venture for him , We yield all to him, *by whom all things were made in Heaven and Earth, visible or invisible, whether they be Thrones, or Dominions, Principalities, or Powers , and he is before all things, and by him all things consist, 1 Coll. 16, 17.* Think upon the Endearments of his Grace, the Zeal of his Love and Sufferings , that he might bring us into Friendship and Favour with God. Oh how nearly doth it concern us to get into his love, that we may live with God! Whether fall we if *Christ* be not our Friend? how do these things touch us to the quick, to the flesh, and to the bone, yea to the marrow, and the Spirit ? One day sure the Acceptance and Favour of *Christ Jesus* will be somewhat Worth. What is there then of all the Worldly Gauds and Glories that

that you can set up as a Rival against his Glorious Majesty? For what things will ye part with your Immortal Hopes in him? How easie, me thinks, it is to the believing serious Soul to scorn and trample upon all those things which we have sometimes called Temptations? How reasonable is it to boast in the Lord, and say, What shall separate us from the Love of God in his dear and blessed Son? 2. If *Christ* have not the Headship and Dominion, he will blast the glory of all our Excellencies, and tarnish the beauty of them.

If we provoke him to jealousy with our parts, wit, learning, his Indignation like a Canker will quickly Eat up our springing Hopes and Glories. It hath been Observed always that the most pregnant Wits in our Schools of Language, have not proved the most Substantial in our Universities, & the forwardest there also have not been the most serviceable in the Church, or Nation; they have been as Trees Transplanted out of our Nurseries which do not prosper accordingly in the Orchard where they should bear Fruit: When as in the Interim many Obscure and Unobserved Souls have come forth from their Privacies like the Great *Gregory* from *Nazianzum*, a poor Country Village in *Capadocia*, who have been the Wonders of the Age, and the Glory of the Church: This comes to pass not only from the divers Natures of the Wit, Capacity,

pacity, and Abilities which are proper to the several Studies, Employments, and Excellencies; nor merely that certain Intellects arrive to Ripeness in their proper periods, before which they are harsh and unsavory; but chiefly and mostly by the blessing of God upon their humility, patience, and Integrity: When as the others have boasted too much of the *Ignis lambens* that Enveloped their Temples, and have Adored too much the brightness of their Intellectuals. *Christ* was not, could not be pleased that his Servants should count themselves his Betters, that they should Believe they knew what was Wisdom better than himself; they have it may be with *Herod* received the Applause of them that cryed out, *Nec vox hominem sonat! the voice of God, and not of man!* Thus the Angel of the Lord had smitten them with dishonor; they bring to God the Sacrifice of *Cain*, whose Error was of Old thought to be, that when he seemed to bring somewhat to God, yet too much to himself; for ye Read, (*Gen. 4. 7.*) after the *Septuagint* thus: *Εἰδὼς ὁ θεὸς πρὸς ἐνέχυρον, ὁ θεὸς δὲ μὴ δέχεται, ἡμάρτετε*; If thou hast brought a right and worthy Offering to God, but hast not divided Right (between him and thy self) hast thou not sinned? To this Reading agree both the *Samaritan Text*, and the *Targum of Hierusalem*, though the *Hebrew Bibles*, and those that are

are derived thence have not the Words ; The belief or Tradition of Antient times seems to have been , that in the *Mincha* , or Meat-Offering which *Cain* brought to the Lord , he took too much for his own Portion ; wherefore God that hath no pleasure in the Illiberal Sacrifices of Churls , who think that all is too much which is bestowed upon him, had no Respect to him , and refused to testifie his Acceptance by sending down fire upon the Altar. But is not this our own case ? have we not counted that *Christ* in Humility, Simplicity, Self-denial, Meekness, and Holiness is but loss, while the Reputation of Men, the praise and profit of the World have been thought all the Gain ? What do we then but set the Celestial and Royal Diadem of God upon our own Heads ? shall he Incourage us in so Horrible a Sacriledge ? shall he contribute to his own Dishonour ?

3ly. If all be not loss for *Christ* with us , he may justly leave all our Parts and Ornaments to be our Infelicity , and the Bane and Milchief of those that converse with us. If unbred Souls commonly prove brutish, inconsiderate, stubborn, and profane ; no lesser or lighter Diseases attend those that have been quickned by Study, Exercise, and Education. The most spritely and vivacious Wits have alwayes proved most Ungovernable, the most

Turbulent Subjects in the State, the most Pesti-
 lent Heriticks in the Church, the worst Friends,
 the worst Neighbours, the worst Husbands or
 Masters to their Relations and Families. The
 Men of middle capacity and stature of mind have
 in the *interim* been successful in their Affairs,
 peaceable in their Deportment, treatable by their
 Allies, and more truly profitable to the World.
 In Ten years there have been more Frayes and
 Seditions ~~in~~ ^{by} one City ~~in~~ ^{as} Florence, than in five
 hundred among the *Switzers* and *Grisons*, people
 of a slower *Genius*, and ~~stronger~~ ^{heavier} Mettle. But what
 need we go so far for Examples? See we not a-
 mong our selves, what the Audacious Wits of
 Men are daily endeavouring and practising? do
 we not see how our *Capitones*, Men of great and
 busie Heads, cannot be at rest, but they enterprize
 and examine every thing, and can suffer nothing
 to settle? how do they as with battering *Rammes*
 shake, undermine, demolish the very fences and
 foundations of Nature, Policy, Piety, and Socie-
 ty? They censure and judge of every matter; and
 what they have not ability to comprehend, or
 humility to submit to, they despise as weak
 and imperfect, or will not Reverence as
 Holy.

τῇ τρυφῇ τῇ τὴν ἐπιγνώσκειν τὰ ἑαυτῶ καὶ
καὶ ἀπολαύσκειν. ΑΛΛ' ἔτι τὸν ἴδιον εἶον, ὡς
ἀτιμώμετον θάνατον, προσελθὼν ἔχ' ὑπομένειν, ἵνα
ἀνακλῶσαι τὸν λογισμὸν, ὡς φῶς ἐφ' ἑαυτὸς καὶ
περιχαλῶν. ΑΛΛ' ἡ ψυχὴ γέμισσα κακῶν παντοδρα-
στῶν, καὶ φρίττεται καὶ φοβεμένη τὰ ἔνδον, ἐκπηδᾷ
θύραζε καὶ πλατῶται περὶ τὰ ἀλλότρια. *Plu-*
tarch περὶ πολυπραγμίας. κερδοσκοπίας ἐνέμεται τὰ
μικρὰ αὐτὸν ἀναπέμπει ἡμᾶς ἐφ' οὗ ἂν εὐρωμεθα
κρεῖττον αὐτῶ ἐρεῖται. *Origines libr. 1*
Contra Celsum.

Ill Work we
make for our
Governors Ec-
clesiastical or
Civil, while we
molest and vex
them with our
unruly practi-
ces, when We
should help
them to bear
their Bur-
thens.

While some be Wiser than Christianity, o-
thers wiser than the Laws, and all the rest
wiser than their Teachers and Governors, we for-
get our selves, and become Reprobate in our
Manners and Conversations, *Nobis obsequii glo-*
ria relicta est, Corn. Tacit. The glory of yeilding
Obedience to those that are over us is our proper
Virtue and Eminence. What now is the cause
of all this Disorder? Learning? Knowledge?
Wisdom? God forbid that we should have
such a Thought in our Hearts! God never
gave Understanding to Men to do them Mis-
chief, no more than day-light to Blear our
Eyes: But the Mischief is, that we Eate more
freely of the Tree of Knowledge, than of Life,

that we have knowledge in Superproportion to our Humility, self-denyal, Modesty, and Sanctity, and so that Sun which should Enlighten our Earth, by our Ill conduct sets it all on fire, and then instead of counting all our Wisdome loss for *Christ*, we are left to the tyranny and sedition of our Thoughts.

4. If we give not *Christ* the preeminence, our Rebellious Affections will pollute and deprave our Judgements: This Honourable City which Traines up so many Youths to Learning, hath not in my Opinion been suitably Happy in them. The reason of which (besides the fore-assigned) is like to be, that the Luxury and many vices of the place like Ill Weeds grow up with the Corn, and choak it, that nothing comes to Perfection. By theis Meanes they who should have by their Studies made themselves serviceable to the Lord Jesus, become but more Ingenuously wicked. Ah! sad conclusion of so much Goodness of God! To conclude, Learning is both Profitable and Honourable, it is the light of our Eyes, the Guide of our Lives, the proper Excellency of Humane Nature: But if it claime precedence of *Christ*, though We were Angels of Heaven, it would bring us down to Hell: Take therefore the good Counsel of the blessed Apostle

1 Cor.

1 Cor. i. 30. 31. Let Christ be made unto us
of God, Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctifi-
cation, and Redemption, and let him that Glories
glory in the Lord.

FINIS.

1 Cor. 2. 9. Let Christ be made unto us
 of God, Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctifi-
 cation, and Redemption, and let him that Glorifies
 us in the Lord.

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